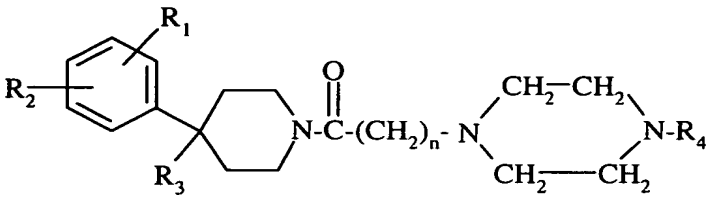
Amendments to the Claims:

Claim 1. (Currently amended): ~~Compound of the~~ A compound of formula (I):



(I)

in which:

- n is 1 or 2;

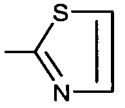
- R_1 represents a halogen atom; a trifluoromethyl radical; a (C_1-C_4)alkyl; a (C_1-C_4)alkoxy; or a trifluoromethoxy radical;

- R_2 represents a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom;

- R_3 represents a hydrogen atom; a group -OR_5; a group -CH_2OR_5; a group -NR_6R_7; a group -NR_8COR_9; a group -$NR_8CONR_{10}R_{11}$; a group -$CH_2NR_{12}R_{13}$; a group -$CH_2NR_8CONR_{14}R_{15}$; a (C_1-C_4)alkoxycarbonyl; or a group -$CONR_{16}R_{17}$;

- or else R_3 constitutes a double bond between the carbon atom to which it is attached and the adjacent carbon atom of the piperidine ring;

- R_4 represents the aromatic group 1,3-thiazol-2-yl of formula:



;

- R_5 represents a hydrogen atom; a (C_1-C_4)alkyl; or a (C_1-C_4)alkylcarbonyl;

- R_6 and R_7 represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a (C_1-C_4)alkyl;

- R_8 represents a hydrogen atom or a (C_1-C_4)alkyl;

- R_9 represents a (C_1-C_4)alkyl or a group -$(CH_2)_m$-NR_6R_7;

- m is 1, 2 or 3;

- R_{10} and R_{11} represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a (C_1-C_4)alkyl;

- R_{12} ~~and R_{13} represent each independently~~ represents a hydrogen atom or a (C_1-C_5)alkyl;

R_{13} ~~may also represent~~ represents a hydrogen atom, a (C_1-C_5)alkyl, a group -$(CH_2)_q$-OH or a group -$(CH_2)_q$-S-CH_3;

- or else R_{12} and R_{13}, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, constitute a

heterocycle selected from aziridine, azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine and morpholine;

- q is 2 or 3;

- R_{14} and R_{15} represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a $(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl;

- R_{16} ~~and R_{17} represent each independently~~ represents a hydrogen atom or a $(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl;

R_{17} ~~may also represent~~ represents a hydrogen atom, a $(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl or a group $-(CH_2)_q-NR_6R_7$;

- or else R_{16} and R_{17}, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, constitute a heterocycle selected from azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine and piperazine which is unsubstituted or substituted in position 4 by a $(C_1$-$C_4)$alkyl;

~~in the form of a base~~ or an acid addition salt ~~with an acid, or in the form of a~~ hydrate or solvate thereof.

Claim 2. (Currently amended): ~~Compound of formula (I)~~ A compound according to ~~Claim 1, characterized in that~~ Claim 1 wherein:

- n is 1;

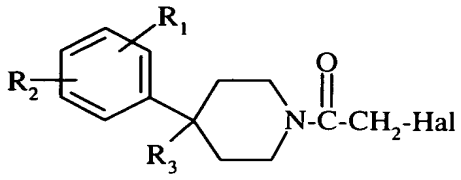
- R_1 is in position 3 of the phenyl and represents a trifluoromethyl radical, a methyl, a methoxy or a trifluoromethoxy radical and R_2 represents a hydrogen atom; or else R_1 is in position 3 of the phenyl and represents a trifluoromethyl radical and R_2 is in position 4 of the phenyl and represents a chlorine atom; and

- R_3 represents a hydroxyl, a methoxy, an aminomethyl, a (methylamino)methyl, or a (dimethylamino)methyl; or else R_3 constitutes a double bond between the carbon atom to which it is attached and the adjacent carbon atom of the piperidine ring;

- R_4 represents a 1,3-thiazol-2-yl~~;~~

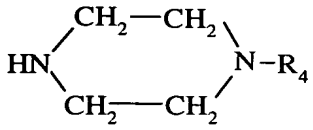
~~in the form of a base or an addition salt with an acid, and also in the form of a hydrate or solvate~~.

Claim 3. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 ~~in which n = 1, characterized in that: a1)~~ wherein a compound of formula (IIa)



(IIa)

in which R_1, R_2 and R_3 are as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1 and Hal represents a halogen atom, ~~preferably chlorine or bromine,~~ with the proviso that when R_3 contains a hydroxyl or amine function these functions may be protected, is reacted with a compound of formula (III)



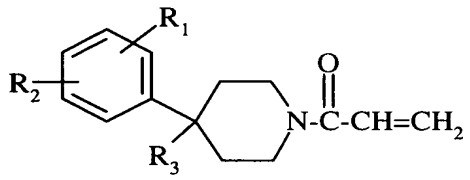
(III)

in which R_4 is as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1;

~~b1) and, after~~ and deprotection of the hydroxyl or amine functions present in R_3 where appropriate~~, the compound of formula (I) is obtained~~.

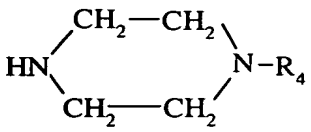
Claim 4. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 in which n = 2~~, characterized in that:~~

~~a2)~~ wherein a compound of formula (IIb)



(IIb)

in which R_1, R_2 and R_3 are as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1, with the proviso that when R_3 contains a hydroxyl or amine function these functions may be protected, is reacted with a compound of formula (III)



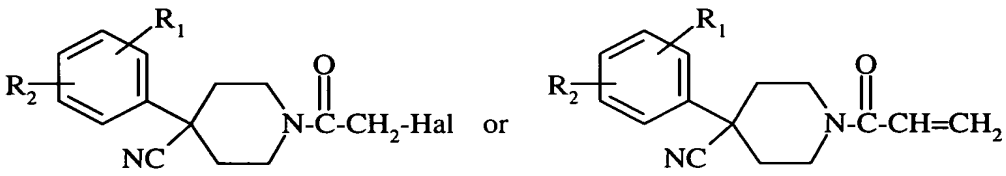
(III)

in which R_4 is as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1;

~~b2) and, after~~ and deprotection of the hydroxyl or amine functions present in R_3 where appropriate~~, the compound of formula (I) is obtained~~.

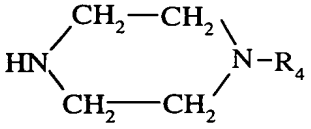
Claim 5. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 in which R_3 represents a group $-CH_2NR_{12}R_{13}$ in which R_{12} and R_{13} each represent hydrogen~~, characterized in that:~~

~~a3)~~ wherein a compound of formula (IIc) or (IId)



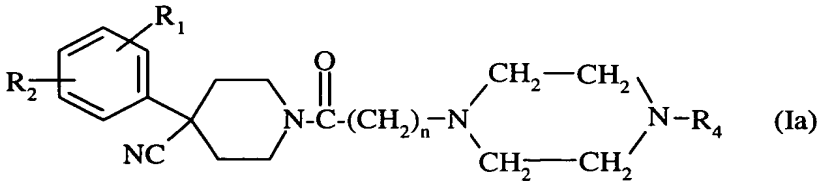
(IIc) or (IId)

in which R_1 and R_2 are as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1 and Hal represents a halogen atom, ~~preferably chlorine or bromine,~~ is reacted with a compound of formula (III)



(III)

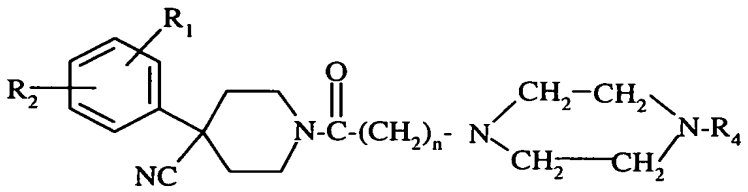
in which R_4 is as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I)~~ in Claim 1 to give a compound of formula (Ia)



(Ia)

~~b3)~~ and the cyano group of the compound of formula (Ia) is reduced ~~to give a compound of formula (I) according to Claim 1 in which $R_3 = CH_2NH_2$~~.

Claim 6. (Currently amended): ~~Compound~~ A compound of formula



(Ia)

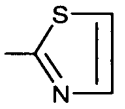
in which:

- n is 1 or 2;

- R_1 represents a halogen atom; a trifluoromethyl radical; a (C_1-C_4)alkyl; a (C_1-C_4)alkoxy; or a trifluoromethoxy radical;

- R_2 represents a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom; and

- R_4 represents the aromatic group 1,3-thiazol-2-yl of formula:



;

~~in the form of a base~~ or an acid addition salt ~~with an acid~~, ~~or in the form of a~~ hydrate or solvate thereof.

Claims 7-9 (Cancelled)

Claim 10. (New) A compound according to Claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:

1-[4-hydroxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-[4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-3,6-dihydro-1-(2*H*)-pyridinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-(aminomethyl)-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-[4-chloro-3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-4-hydroxy-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-hydroxy-4-(3-methoxyphenyl)-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-

ethanone;
1-[4-hydroxy-4-(3-methylphenyl-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
1-[4-methoxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3,-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
1-[4-hydroxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethoxy)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
1-[4-[(dimethylamino)methyl]-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
1-[4-[(methylamino)methyl]-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
or an acid addition salt, hydrate or solvate thereof.

Claim 11. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 1 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 12. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 2 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 13. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 10 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 14. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours; metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 1.

Claim 15. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours;

metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 2.

Claim 16. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours; metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 10.